

**VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**  
**Virginia Office of Newcomer Services**



Request for Applications (RFA)  
For Funding Under the  
Virginia Refugee Resettlement Program  
RFA # GONC-06-006  
Questions & Answers from July 14, 2005  
Pre-application Workshop

**Question 1**

Regarding the requirement that sub-grantees are required to have on staff a “designated” VNIS staff person (RFA page 15): Does this position need to be full-time? What are the guidelines?

**Question 1 Response**

The RFA does not mandate this as a full-time position, nor does it assign a specific number of hours per week devoted to this function. It is the expectation of ONS that VNIS data entry be ongoing, accurate, and timely.

**Question 2**

On page 17, the RFA stipulates that the average hourly wage for refugee social services (RSS) is (\$8.35) and for Targeted Assistance (TAP) it is (\$8.25) statewide. Why can't a lower average wage level be set as the goal for the balance of the state, based on the difference in labor market wages and salaries from those of northern Virginia?

**Question 2 Response**

The average hourly wage is one of six performance measures under which the Virginia Refugee Resettlement Program is measured. That goal, in addition to the five other outcome goals, is negotiated with the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement and cannot be altered at this time.

**Question 3**

Regarding the 24 month limit for service provision, as noted on page 12 of the RFA, Priorities for Service, how should applicants interpret this 24 month limit?

**Question 3 Response**

ONS recognizes that the Code of Federal Regulations allows refugees to be served up to 5 years after their arrival in the United States. The 24 month stipulation is not a prohibition on serving refugees after that period, but rather signifies that a sub-grantee's resources and efforts must be concentrated on refugees during the first 24 months. It is ONS' belief and experience that the social service funding level is generally sufficient for providing services to the priority groups, but not to refugees beyond 24 months.

#### **Question 4**

Regarding use of a 90 day retention rate for refugees enrolled in English as a Second Language (ESL), on page 19 of the RFA, can the indicator be dropped or changed? The following issue was presented: Sometimes refugees are enrolled in ESL first, then are placed in a job, but subsequently drop out of ESL, citing schedule conflict or lack of time for ESL.

#### **Question 4 Response**

ONS will not alter or drop this indicator at this time. It is important that ESL performance measures be implemented in order to determine the utilization level and effectiveness of ESL. Since this is a new performance measure, ONS will monitor it closely, and respond accordingly if the issue that has been presented proves to be widespread. **Applicants who view this as an issue may point it out in the RFA narrative as they describe their plan for service delivery.**

#### **Question 5**

Can budget forms be made available in Excel format?

#### **Question 5 Response**

The budget forms in the ONS RFA do not mirror the VDSS budget forms. Applicants are to use the budget forms that are in Word and PDF format on the VDSS Website.

#### **Question 6**

What font should be used for the narrative?

#### **Question 6 Response**

The RFA does not indicate font size, although ONS recommends the use of Arial 12 point font.

#### **Question 7**

What is the time frame between the application deadline and the awarding of the funding?

#### **Question 7 Response**

It is the Department's mandate that signed and negotiated contracts be executed by October 1. During the timeframe between August 8 and October 1 ONS will work diligently with sub-grantees to fulfill this mandate.